



ORPC SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the ORPC Social Work Program is to empower and advocate for parents and their families by providing high quality, strengths-based, compassionate, and comprehensive social work services to parents navigating Dependency and Neglect cases in Colorado.

DESCRIPTION

The ORPC contracts with independent social workers who have an MSW/LSW/LCSW and family advocates who are professionals with commensurate education and experience in the field of child welfare. Through a JBC funded Pilot Program in the 4th, 17th and 21st Judicial Districts, the ORPC reviews social work assignments to parent legal defense teams where there has been an out of home removal and the case meets EPP guidelines. Throughout the state, RPCs may request the assignment of a social worker or family advocate to their legal teams after consultation with the ORPC Social Worker - Director of Programs.

INTERVENTIONS

ASSESS

- Client needs & goals
- Psychosocial status & current functioning
- Need for further evaluations
- Intellectual capacity
- Parenting skills/limitations

EDUCATE

- Who are the players
- How does the child welfare process work
- Client responsibilities & expectations
- DHS responsibilities & mandates
- Education on treatment issues

SUPPORT

- Attend family engagement meetings
- Observe parent-child visits
- Accompany to important appointments
- Crisis intervention
- Identify obstacles & help resolve them

COMMUNICATE

- Introduce the role to all involved
- Research & share resources
- Solicit other perspectives
- Keep client up to date on the court process
- Assist RPC attorney with effective client communication & engagement



OFFICE OF RESPONDENT
PARENTS' COUNSEL
Protecting the Fundamental Right to Parent

ADVOCATE

- Help parents use their voice effectively
- Make recommendations to visiting quality & frequency
- Explore family supports & alternative placements
- Participate in return home & safety planning
- Help parents advocate for their child's needs & participate in their child's services

STRATEGIZE

- Facilitate a parent's involvement in their representation
- Identify ways to move case forward
- Recommend alternative treatment plans
- Consult social science research

TEAM SOCIAL WORKER LIMITATIONS

Social workers and family advocates on legal teams for parents do not supervise visits for children and parents. They do not substitute for the department caseworker and they do not testify in court proceedings. They are independent contractors except for those professionals who are employed by an individual RPC or legal firm.

HOW RPCs REQUEST A SOCIAL WORKER

In pilot jurisdictions, eligible cases are automatically reviewed for early social work assignments by the ORPC Social Worker – Director of Programs. Social workers are assigned depending on available resources. RPCs in all counties can contact the ORPC to request a social work assignment when it would benefit a parent they represent. The requests are handled on a case-by-case basis depending on the client needs and the current available social work resources.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR QUESTIONS:
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